



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield
(202) 224-6770

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***ENZI PRAISES HOUSE PASSAGE OF BILL TO PREVENT GENETIC
INFORMATION DISCRIMINATION
PRESIDENT EXPECTED TO SIGN LEGISLATION TO SAVE LIVES,
REDUCE HEALTH CARE COSTS***

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today applauded the House of Representatives for its passage of the “Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act,” H.R. 493, a bill that will prohibit health insurers and employers from attempting to use genetic information to discriminate against persons with potential health problems.

“The ‘Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act’ will help fulfill the promise of genetic research to save lives and reduce health care costs,” Enzi said. “This legislation establishes basic protections that encourage individuals to take advantage of life-saving genetic screening, counseling, testing, and new therapies, without fearing that this information will be misused or abused.”

“This bill protects both employees and employers by setting a standard of conduct that is easy to understand and easy to follow,” Enzi said. “We are far better off setting uniform, consistent rules of the road clearly and up front, rather than allowing them to be set piecemeal through litigation.”

Enzi said the bill will prohibit genetic discrimination in health insurance, including decisions that affect health insurance premiums, contribution amounts, and eligibility, as well as genetic discrimination in the workplace, including employment decisions like hiring, firing, job assignments, and promotions.

The Senate approved the bill, co-sponsored by Senator Enzi, Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA), Chairman of the HELP Committee, and Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME), by a 95-0 vote last week. The House approved the bill today, 414-1.

“This bill has been a long time coming. After more than a year of hard work to find common ground among Senate and House Republicans and Democrats, I am proud to send this important bill to President Bush to sign into law.”

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